DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 137 952 EA 009 430

AUTHOR Jackson, Jesse
TITLE [Golden Key Award Acceptance Speech.]
PUB DATE 27 Feb 77
NOTE 9p.; Speech given at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of School Administrators (109th, Las Vegas, Nevada, February 25-28, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Opportunities; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Moral Values; *Motivation; Social Influences; *Social Values; Students

ABSTRACT

The speaker raises a number of his concerns about education, including the need to pursue excellence, educational opportunity, educational atmosphere, motivation, instruction in priorities, individual responsibility, and personal and social values. (IRT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED137952

REV.JESSE JACKSON - GOLDEN KEY AWARD WINNER - February 27, 1977

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

I want to thank the members of the American Association of School Administrators for being generous enough to honor me and my teacher today. This award obligates us to continue to serve--in whatever meaningful way possible--to lift the sights, and to extend the horizons of education for the people of our nation and our world. I have an appreciation of the symbolic meaning of a key. A key has as its function the opening of doors. And I would assume that a golden key should be used to open special doors. If this key is to have meaning then it must be allowed to open the doors of every state superintendent in this nation, in order that our PUSH for excellence drive might find a place high up on the agenda as we transform American education.

I would like to, with the help of your organization, convene this spring a meeting with key members of your steering committee and other credible national educators, in order to share with you the benefits of our findings and begin to use the total involvement concept so as to redistribute the responsibilities of education among all of the people who see education as important. Only through major dialogue and action between home, church, school and the mass media will we begin to approximate the goals for quality and excellence in education. I have several challenges that I would like to leave with you today:

(1) The priority must be the pursuit of educational excellence, not merely ~~the pursuit of~~ educational existence. We are suffering from an attitudinal

EA 009 430

crisis in American education, combined with an ethical collapse in the general culture. As regards the attitudinal crisis, surely we must know there is no material solution to a spiritual crisis. It is not your aptitude but your attitude that determines your altitude, with a little intestinal fortitude.

The Vietnam War and the trauma of Watergate appear to have been healed on the surface, as politicians from both parties shake hands in Washington to usher in the new administration. That is merely the scab. Sores must heal from the inside out. The tragic effects of the war and Watergate are not merely the fact that one president could not run for office again, and another president cannot complete his term in office, but the hopes and aspirations of our youth were bludgeoned and in the absence of moral authorities in high places--with the assassinations of the Kennedy's and King--a psychological rebellion set in that expressed itself in immoral permissiveness and spiritual decay, more concretely in a pregnancy epidemic among teenage girls; in rise in alcoholism; the nationalizing of dope; with many of our schools becoming centers of distribution and loss of goals in life; and the reduction of the will to achieve greatness.

Unless and until this generation is ressurrected from this moral abyss, and a new moral tone is established for the nation, all of our resources will be poured in a giant bucket that has a hole in it. The death of ethics is the sabotage of excellence.

* Each school must have a plant manager or a principal who is both free and responsible to produce. The principal or plant manager must be rewarded on production, not merely seniority, politics and tenacity. The plant manager must have moral and legal authority. The moral authority results from the trust developed in the community and the legal authority comes from the assignment by the board of the superintendent.

Discipline must be taught and self-discipline must be learned. Discipline must be seen as therapy and valuable, not as punishment and arbitrary.

(1) Politicians. They exact and distribute taxes.

(2) The board. It makes policy.

(3) The superintendent. Is both the academic and administrative head. Both heads must be projected.

(4) The staff.

These first four levels are in down town America. They appear to be preoccupied with the 'B's--Blacks, browns, budgets, balance and busing. But beneath the iceberg of that burden and all the arguments about the arithmetic of races and faces. At the heart of the iceberg out in the community are:

(5) The principal

(6) Teachers

(7) Students, and

(8) Parents.

And if that system is to work, all eight of those cylinders must be operative.

(3)Excellence requires three things simultaneously:

(1) Opportunity--adherence to the 14th Amendment.

(2) Equal funding-- (real estate tax base is antiquated)

(3) Metropolitan desegregation. And, a spiritual commitment to have one school system and one tax system and one nation under God, inspired by the desire of a leadership that has an appreciation and a vision of the good of the commonwealth.

(4)Atmosphere: (a) Total involvement (eight cylinders working) must replace vs. elitist isolation, where a school is on a quarantined island for students and teachers only. (b) Home, church and school must close ranks & broaden the base of vs. media responsibility. The qualitative and quantitative access that the media now has to the mind of this generation means that this body must begin -- at every level, location and national-- to have both meetings by the media executives of a given city to create an atmosphere that

will make education more likely. The radio, with its lyrics of decay, often advocating sex without responsibility and the television ethic of killing without cause--presenting life at its superficial level--must become part of the pursuit of excellence.

(3) Motivation: Self reliance must be seen as the key to the development of the human personality. The goal of every free person and every free nation is self-determination and in order to get self-determination you must have the philosophy of self-reliance. You must develop self-discipline; you must acquire self-initiative. It is no accident that Mao saw the key to the emancipation of China in self-reliance; that Ghandi saw the key to Indian liberation not in the British Parliament, but in the Satya Graha--soul force--in the Indian people; or that Jesus challenged his people to accept that God within and the kingdom of heaven is at hand; or that Dr. King said that the liberation of oppressed people cannot first be seen by the integration of races and faces from without, but rather the integration of a whole and healthy personality within, or that Emerson wrote his classic essay on self-reliance.

We must thus develop will power in [redacted] people and create within them an independent syndrome. This does not mean that local state and federal government must do less. It simply means that people who have will power rather than pull power and a heightened social consciousness are more likely to develop the political wherewithall to make our politicians responsive.

Another dimension of motivation is future possibilities. It is foolish for us to continue graduating our children at a rate where 20 percent of them go to college and the other 80 percent go to the world of work or welfare. And yet they are neither trained with their hands to work on a job, or to work and get off welfare. We must broaden our appreciation for the value of vocational education and rise above the stereotype that people who use their hands don't use their heads; and people who use their heads don't need their hands.

To bring this change in the educational agenda of the nation, leaders for this phase must be educators and not politicians. The error is the Faubuses and the Wallaces blocking the school doors and distracting the attention of the broader population with the perverted arguments about race and class. These distractions must stop. We're losing money and time. The minds are going to waste and the interests of our children and the real goals of education are being dissipated. Educators must teach teh communities and now allow politicians to disrupt them. Educators must be as sensitive from a constitutional and a conscientious point of view of the freedom of education without being censored by boards--just as journalists are to the freedom of speech and press without being censored by editors.

(4) We must teach priorities, not merely teach intellect. Victor Frankel's theories about logo therapy are still essentially sound. He argues that if people have a "why" for living they can endure any "how" of living. We despair too much about hte past and hope too little for the future.

(5) Responsibility of the victim. Even the victim has the responsibility to bring about change. The victim must be responsible to resist oppression. The victim must be responsible to not cooperate with evil. The victim must be responsible to take advantage of every opportunity that does exist. The victim must be responsible to cooperate with the good. The victim must be responsible to resist alcohol, to avoid fratricide, to resist drugs, to avoid unplanned pregnancies. The victim must be responsible to not sit in the back of the bus or go to the back of the restaurant, or be denied the right to vote. But the victim must also resist the temptation to sit in the back of the graduating class. And, as difficult as it is to teach, the victim is not responsible for slavery, but the victim must be responsible for liberation. It is not in the oppressors interest to free the victim. Ultimately, the lesson that the disenfranchised must learn is that every outside liberator is a false prophet. Nobody will save us from

us but us. That is true for a person. That is true for a race. That is true for a field of study. That is true for a nation.

(6) Educational imperative. Ignorance costs more than intelligence. If a person lives to be 60 uneducated, the person is more costly and less productive than one who is educated and lives to be the same age.

If that's not enough for you--in a cost-conscious nation, in Illinois, if a young person goes to the State University for four years it will cost less than $4,000 a year. If a person is in the penitentiary, it will cost slightly more than $13,000. So there is an educational imperative, and economic imperative and a moral imperative. In the midst of an energy crisis we must not leave undeveloped the most valuable source of energy we have: human energy.

(7) We must be driven by a higher vision and value system. We must see education with moral values and with the educators as the keys to the kingdom of a new world. We need doctors--but doctors who are more concerned about public health than personal wealth. We need lawyers, but lawyers whose first commitment is to justice, not merely judgement. We need preachers who prophecy and not merely profiteer. We need men and women who will define their personhood not merely by making babies, but by raising them. And, above all, teachers who will teach for life, not just for a living.

NEITHER BOUNDLESS LIBERALISM NOR STATIC CONSERVATISM IS THE ANSWER. LIBERALS RESIST DISCIPLINE. CONSERVATIVES ARE TOO NARROW AND NON-REDEMPTIVE. BOTH ARE TOO LAZY AS THINKERS.

MORAL WICKEDNESS LEADS TO PHYSICAL WEAKNESS LEADS TO SPIRITUAL APATHY LEADS TO POLITICAL INDIFFERENCE, AND THUS, EDUCATIONAL INDIFFERENCE.

WE MUST FIGHT TO CHANGE PUBLIC POLICY. BUT IN A MORAL STRUGGLE THERE MUST BE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE, THE GOALS THEY SEEK. THE ENDS FOR WHICH WE STRIVE MUST HAVE A RELATIONSHIP TO THE MEANS BY WHICH WE LIVE - REAP WHAT WE SOW. THERE IS A NATIONAL SPIRITUAL CRISIS. IF WE MAKE A BETTER MOUSETRAP, THE WORLD WILL BEAT A PATH TO OUR DOOR.

YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION, FOR YIELDING IS SIN. MANY OF OUR PEOPLE YIELDED, GAVE UP, BECAME DRUNK WITH CYNICISM, DESPAIR, SELF-CRITICISM, FEAR, IN SPITE OF SLAVERY; A WRECKED SHIP, AND BROKEN HEARTS. OUR CHALLENGE IS TO PICK UP THE PIECES, BIND THE BROKEN-HEARTED, SOOTHE THE ACHES OF THE WOUNDED, FORGIVE EACH OTHER FOR WORDS OF ANGER OR PASSION DURING HEAT OF THE CONFUSION, MOVE ON TO HIGHER GROUND, SAVE THE CHILDREN AND RESTORE FAMILY STABILITY.

*LET'S TOUR OUR SCHOOLS AND ASSERT OURSELVES AS MORAL AUTHORITIES, REVIVE DISCIPLINE AND DEVELOP OUR CHILDREN.

*PRIVATE SCHOOLS IS NOT THE ANSWER - PRIVATE PARENTS WITH PERSONAL SUPERVISION.

*WE ARE MOVING TOWARD SELF-GOVERNMENT. IT DEMANDS THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE.

*ONLY WITH EXCELLENCE CAN WE ACHIEVE THE LEVEL OF MORAL CONDUCT THAT WILL GIVE US POWER, SELF-RESPECT AND MORAL LEADERSHIP.

*ONLY WITH EXCELLENCE CAN WE AS JOURNALISTS WRITE OUR OWN STORY AND GIVE OUR ANALYSIS.

*ONLY WITH EXCELLENCE CAN WE ACHIEVE CHAMPIONSHIP STATUS, IN ATHLETICS, MUSIC, ART, CULTURE AND SCIENCE.

*ONLY WITH EXCELLENCE CAN WE OUT-DISTANCE OUR FOE, REWARD OUR FRIENDS AND REALIZE OUR OWN POTENTIAL.

*WITH EXCELLENCE WE CAN OUTRUN, OUT-THINK, OUT-TALK, OUT-SING, OUT-POLITIC, OUT-MANEUVER, OUTLAST OUR OPPOSITION.

NO GRAVE CAN HOLD OUR BODY DOWN. NO LIE CAN LIVE FOREVER. WITH GOD'S HELP, WE WILL HEW OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN OF DESPAIR A ROCK OF. . . . .

WITH GOD'S HELP, WE WILL LOVE AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER. OUR WOUNDS WILL BE HEALED, OUR BROKEN HEARTS MENDED, OUR CONFUSION TRANSFORMED INTO CLARITY. WE WILL SURVIVE. WE WILL WIN. WE WILL OVERCOME!